(e) what are the details of the steps being taken by Government to remove the deficiencies to check smuggling?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ANIL SHASTRI): (a) to (e) It is not possible to estimate the quantum of contraband goods being smuggled into or out of the country. However, the value of seizures of contraband goods including gold, silver, drugs; electronic goods, etc. effected during the last 3 calendar years as given in the table below show an increasing trend.

| Year | Value of contraband seized (Rs. in crores) |
|---|---|
| 1988 . . . | 443.14 |
| 1989 . . . | 554.59 |
| 1990 . . . (Upto 14-5-90) | 26 .62 |

*(Figure is provisional)

Contraband goods are smuggled into and out of the country through the land borders, the coastline and through the international airports and sea ports. The anti-smuggling agencies have been geared up at all the vulnerable points. Sophisticated equipment like X-ray Baggage Machines, Metal Detectors and Night vision binaculors are being increasingly used. Self-loading rifles have also been supplied wherever considered necessary. Close co-ordination is being maintained amongst all the agencies concerned in the detection and prevention of smuggling. The assistance of the various agencies of the State Governments is taken for preventing smuggling activities whenever considered necessary. The State Governments are also empowered to detain persons involved in smuggling activities under the Preventive Detention Laws.

**Long Term Fiscal Policy**

993. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 1162 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 22nd March, 1990 and state:

(a) whether Government have since formulated a long term fiscal policy; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ANIL SHASTRI): (a) and (b) The new Long Term Fiscal Policy for the period 1990-95 is still under formulation.

**Processing Charges for Cheques**

994. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal from the commercial banks to charge processing charges for cheques from the clients;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) whether such a step will increase the banking cost and will have adverse impact on the final price index for different items?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ANIL SHASTRI): (a) and (b) To facilitate faster clearance of cheques and to improve customer service, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) provides mechanised cheque processing service in the Clearing Houses at Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta and Madras. In keeping with the well established practice of sharing costs for operating the Clearing House by member banks, RBI proposes to recover cheque processing charges from member banks on a no-profit-no-loss basis to cover the operating expenses incurred by it on equip-